

In our first Winter Activities email, we talked about swimming – and why it’s such a great winter sport. Today we’re going to talk about something that is not a “sport” – but it’s definitely something you can do. It’s simple, it’s convenient, and it doesn’t require any equipment – you can do it right in your workspace. How? We’re going to introduce you to some cubicle workouts, or stationary exercises! This latest category of exercise can be done **anywhere**, at **anytime** using the desk, chair, or the environment where you work. Build stronger abs, legs or arms in a few minutes per day at your work station. (Risk Management says “Be sure to use a stationary chair or one with locked wheels for chair exercises.”) Below are some exercises you can do, broken down into 3 categories. Choose a few and start working out – at your desk! (I have to admit, just reading some of these makes my muscles ache!)

If you are looking for other ways you can get active at your desk, join us as teamWELL members Chad Hett and Margaret Penado discuss and demonstrate different ideas, techniques and exercises!

Workspace Exercises Demonstration and Discussion

Community Room – Main Library

Monday, November 21st

12:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Abdominal Toning:

www.3fatchicks.com/4-desk-exercises-for-toned-abs/

Sitting-Down Crunches

Crunches are one of the best exercises you can do to develop abs. Fortunately, you don’t need to position yourself on the floor to do this exercise or buy any special equipment. You can do crunches right on your desk during your break. Start by planting your feet on the floor and sitting back on your chair with your back straight. Next, cross your arms over your chest just as you would during a regular crunch exercise. Begin pushing your chest in a downward position as if you are doing a slight bow. Remember to keep your back straight as much as possible. If you feel the muscles in your stomach contracting then you are doing the exercise right. Do six repetitions to complete a set. Increase the number of sets as you get more comfortable.



Leg Lifts

Another desk exercise that you can try if you wish to tone your abs in the comfort of your office is the leg lift. You can begin this exercise by sitting up straight in your chair but nearer to the edge. Place your hands firmly on the arms of the chair to support yourself. If your chair does not have armrests, you can also place your hands to the sides of the seat. Next, focusing on your shoulders and upper torso, lean back on the chair while maintaining a straight back. Also, be careful not to reach the back of the chair. Stretch out your legs in front of you and lower them until your heels are about an inch off the floor. Raise them up slowly until you feel a contraction of muscles in your abdomen. Repeat the exercise six times to complete a set.

Reverse Sit-Up

The desk reverse sit-up begins in a position much similar to the beginning position of the leg lift. However, instead of stretching your legs and lifting them, bend your knees and slowly lift them toward your chest. Next, slowly lower your legs until your feet touch the floor again. It’s important to put the strain on your ab muscles while doing this exercise. It’s also important that you relax your neck and shoulders during this exercise.

Bicycle Exercise

While you’re doing the reverse sit-up, you might as well throw in some bicycle exercises in your routine. This time, try to lean back farther towards the chair. Next, start rotating your legs and feet as though you are riding an invisible bicycle. Do this as you count up to thirty.

Isometric Exercises

www.3fatchicks.com/5-isometric-exercises-you-can-do-at-your-desk/

Stationary Abdominal Crunch

One isometric exercise you can do at your desk to keep your abs in fabulous shape is the stationary abdominal crunch. This exercise is similar to the regular crunch, but you can do it sitting at your desk whenever you want to and without drawing any attention to yourself. Simply sit up straight while sitting at your desk, with your feet flat on the floor. Contract your abdominal muscles as you would during a floor crunch and hold the contraction for at least ten seconds. Repeat at least 2 to 3 times each session.

Hand-to-Hand Resistance

Another isometric exercise to try at your desk is the hand-to-hand resistance. This is very easy to do at any time while sitting at your desk. Sit up straight and move to the edge of your chair so your legs are comfortable and your feet are flat on the floor. Raise both arms in front of you to chest level. Slowly move hands together and press them against each other. This resistance is what enables the muscle to strengthen. Hold for a count of at least ten seconds, preferably twenty. Do 2 to 3 sets for best results.

Leg Extensions

This isometric exercise is also done while sitting right at your desk. Start with your back pressed against the back of your chair and both feet flat on the floor. Begin by lifting one leg slowly to a ninety degree angle. Do not lock your knee into place; simply hold the position with your toes reaching toward your shin. Hold for a count of 15 to 20 seconds. Do at least 2 to 3 repetitions for each leg.



Calf Extension

This isometric exercise does require you to stand up, but will give you a break from sitting and can be done while standing right next to your desk. Stand up and raise yourself up onto your toes, extending your calves. Hold the raised position for a count of at least 15 to 20 seconds and repeat three times.

Desk Resistance Squat

This isometric exercise requires you to use your desk in a different manner. You must ensure that your desk is heavy and immobile before attempting this exercise. Start from a standing position and lean against one side of your desk. Slowly lower your body until you are in a sitting position with your thighs flat. Hold the position for a count of 10 to 30 seconds and repeat 2 to 3 times.

Stretches

<http://www.3fatchicks.com/6-desk-exercises-to-help-relieve-stress/>

Back Stretch

A side bend can give your back a much needed mid day stretch. Sitting straight up, at the edge of your chair, stretch your arms above your head, and interlace the fingers. Then, lean to one side and hold the position, then rotate to the other side and hold the position. Repeat this a few times for a good stretch.

Neck Stretch

Tilt your head forward to stretch the back of the neck. Hold for a few seconds. Repeat this a few times for a good stretch. Then, sitting straight up, turn your head in one direction, hold for a few seconds and then the other direction.

Upper Back

Sit straight up and bring one arm across your body. Your elbow should be loose. With the other arm, hold between shoulder and elbow. Pull the arm across your body and hold. Repeat a few times with both arms for a good stretch.

Leg Pull

Stand facing your desk. You can use your desk for balance. Bend one leg and pull up on the leg from a little above the ankle. Pull up towards the buttocks until you feel a good stretch, and hold for a few seconds. Repeat a few times on each leg.

Hips & Thighs

Again, use your desk for balance. This time, keep your leg straight and stretch it out behind you. Slowly raise your leg up and lower; repeat this a few times on both legs.

Stairs

If you work in a building with some stairs, you can also climb stairs during a break. Climbing stairs gets you physically away from the desk and can help clear your mind as well as get your heart rate going.

And here's something you can incorporate that you might not have thought of...ballet moves. Yes, football players often take ballet to increase their balance, flexibility, and stability so that they can move that ball down the field with greater grace in motion.



There are simple building blocks used by dancers in core ballet motions. If you look closely, you can see these in every jump, landing, pirouette, and step. Ballet dancers, men and women, work daily to perfect these basics at the ballet barre. These elements are: the plie, tendu, and releve. These simple ballet exercises can also be used in a daily exercise regimen for office athletes. Consider 15 minutes a day doing these simple exercises while supporting yourself with a hand on the wall or on the edge of your desk. To view a description of these simple exercises to tone leg muscles and build balance and stability, visit http://www.ehow.com/list_7211187_ballet-floor-exercises.html and http://www.ehow.com/video_6792509_tendu-step-ballet-dancing.html.



For additional exercises, google “Cubicle Exercises” – there are boatloads of sites with exercises listed!

When you work in an office and find yourself sitting all the time, it's important to try to make some time and effort to stretch out and get some stress relief during the day. Some exercises that can be done right at your desk can offer some instant relief for your body and mind. But, don't overlook some other ways of getting your heart working a little more, like taking the stairs, or standing up to take a phone call. Or, take a break and go for a walk. The important thing is to give your mind a breather and give your body a good stretch. Sometimes the best way to have energy to get through the day is to give your body a little work of its own.

Let's keep moving!